



June 2009

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Streets to Serve as Parks All in a Day's Work: Potrero Hill's Firehouse 37

By Lisa Tehrani

While new zoning in the Showplace Square area permits housing, essential community amenities, like open space and transit have yet to be developed, with the amount of public funding available for this purpose likely to be scarce. To help plan for green space, the San Francisco Planning Department is holding a series of meetings, beginning with a walking tour of Showplace Square scheduled for June 16th. A June 24th workshop will focus on identifying the community's needs and priorities, and discussing potential sites for recreation and open space. Additional workshops will deal with conceptual designs and financial issues.

So far Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association Vice President Dick Millet isn't impressed with the process. "It is a bunch of nonsense. They show us a bunch of pictures, but they don't have any money and don't really have any plans. It is just a pony show," he stated. Others are more positive. Corinne Woods, a Mission Creek resident and Neighborhood Parks Council coordinator, is glad that the Planning Department is searching for ways to provide more open space. According to Woods, once a plan is developed there will be "an opportunity to go

out to the philanthropic community and City agencies and talk to them about funding options."

Some open space will be paid for with development fees charged on new construction. But these funds will not be sufficient to finance the entire plan. According to Woods, "You can't put it all on the backs of the developers. Those fees have to go to a lot of different things." Given the current poor economy, it's unknown when new housing construction will begin to contribute fee revenue.

According to the Planning Department, four acres of open space is needed to accompany the planned residential development in Showplace Square to meet accepted standards. While noting that amount of space would be ideal, Steve Wertheim, the planner leading the effort, acknowledged that most of the City – particularly Southeast San Francisco – is underserved in terms of open space. "There's not a lot of vacant land in San Francisco, and acquiring land is also very expensive. Therefore, if we do get that amount of space much of it will have to come from underused open space and rights-of-way," he explained.

Using public rights-of-way, generally in the form of streets, is the latest way of finding land for

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Station 37. Photograph by Michael Accomazzo.

By Deia de Brito

The firefighters at Station 37, at the top of Potrero Hill, typically get upwards of five calls during a given 24-hour period, usually in the middle of the night. Between shopping and cooking, testing water pressure, conducting fire drills at neighborhood schools, and listening to a constant stream of dispatches, the possibility

of an alarm always hangs in the air. Similar to war, firefighters live in a state of suspenseful near-boredom, occasionally interrupted by a rip of potentially dangerous excitement, an adrenaline rush.

The only City department

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New Place to Play



Franklin Square's new playground is a swinging place to be. Photo by Joey Chandler. www.jchandlerphotography.com.

Starr King Elects Board

By Sarah Marloff

Last month more than 50 Potrero Hill residents gathered at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House (Nabe) to elect a new board for Starr King Openspace. Starr King is San Francisco's only hilltop open space that's not owned by the Department of Recreation and Parks' Natural Areas Program. Instead, it's run by a nonprofit, which is managed by a board of directors. Only three board members remained active from the last election, which was held in 2006 – Susanne Shields, her husband Ralph Hunter and Arthur Feinstein – all of whom were termed out of office, leaving nine vacant seats to be filled.

According to the nonprofit's bylaws – which were not available during the meeting – candidates and voters for the board positions had to be Potrero Hill residents. Seventeen residents were nominated for the nine open slots. To receive a ballot those entering the Nabe during the meeting had to present identification with a Potrero address.

After the votes were cast and counted, the newly elected board members included David Gober – who's been working with the Openspace for the last several months on website maintenance – Joshua Aidlin and Carolyn Bird. The three received the most votes, qualifying them for a three-year term. Andie

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Publisher's View Father's Day

By Steven J. Moss

"You're going to have three kids," my seven-year old daughter Sara announced, after examining the number of lines on my wrist. I tried not to wince as she held up her arm for me to predict her child-bearing fortune.

I came to fatherhood at an age that used to be called late. Sara was born when I was 40 years old. She was the second of my wife's three significant pregnancies. We lost what would have been a son to a still-born delivery more than five months into term; and chose to abort a fetus after tests indicated significant abnormalities. Both would have been boys. The loss of these almost sons pops like painful bubbles in my head when I see other young girls playing with their brothers, or when Sara alludes to her desire for a sibling.

For most of my life I did everything possible to avoid becoming a father. It wasn't just about birth control, but a stereotypical male unwillingness to commit to anything more than an afternoon bike ride. It was half-way through our marriage before I started calling my partner, Debbie, my "wife," and I didn't acknowledge that I fully wanted Sara until the minute she was born. I can't explain this poor citizenship when it comes to family, at least not in a few sentences. Mostly, I just didn't want to grow up.

I made good use of my pre-fatherhood time. By the time Sara arrived I'd traveled extensively on five

continents, spending significant time in Israel, Senegal, and South Africa. I co-founded an economic consulting firm and founded a nonprofit. I invested time and money in various forms of therapy, trying to figure out who I was and who I wanted to be. I became the person I am now.

Except from a biological perspective, becoming a father isn't like turning on a light switch. It's akin to making tea: a sudden splash into boiling water, followed by a slow transformation. But from the day Sara was born I made a few commitments that I'm glad I've kept. When she was a baby I spent one full day during the work week with her; since she entered preschool, and now elementary school, I've picked her up every day before 4 p.m., and frequently earlier; and I took her to swimming lessons when she turned three, driving to Half Moon Bay once a week for almost two years. Today Sara swims like a mermaid, and we're as close as a father can be with his daughter.

As late-breaking parents know, there's no small irony that we spend much of our lives trying not to get pregnant, and are left with a short sprint doing everything we can to have children. Though my wife and I have flirted with adopting, chances are we've created the family we're going to be. We recently added a dog, Lucky, whose name, given to him by my daughter, is a good description of me.

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Community Leaders: Neighbors that Make a Difference

By Kerry Fleisher

A couple moving to Potrero Hill needs help. Their infant daughter requires immediate daycare, they've burned through their start-up capital for a new business, and they discover that a proposed development threatens to block the view from their new apartment. This couple is in luck: dozens of Hill and Dogpatch-based community activists dedicate themselves to providing cooperative daycare, networking local businesses, negotiating with developers, and generally improving the lives of their neighbors.

These mostly behind-the-scenes leaders brainstorm how to cope with new development at Potrero Booster Neighborhood Association meetings, and debate the virtues of parking permits at Dogpatch Neighborhood Association (DNA) meetings. They juggle child-rearing, jobs, and other responsibilities to spend a Sunday morning planting flowers at Daniel Webster Elementary School. Even in a diminished economy their volunteer work remains steadfast.



Sara O'Neill is a founding member of Slippery Fish, a cooperative childcare center located at Axis Café on 8th Street. When daycare costs proved to be steeper than they'd imagined, O'Neill and three other mothers decided to rent out a shared childcare space and create a learning environment where their children could "grow up in the presence of people they trust" and parenting tips could be exchanged. A First Five Parent Action grant, acquired with the help of former Potrero Hill Parents Association leader Natalie Freeberg, gave the group the boost they needed. Soon kids from 18 months to three years old were settling into a two day a week "play care" routine with parents - rather than hired staff - nurturing their growth. O'Neill's two kids, John Haley, three, and Solveig, one, are part of a growing brood of young Slippery Fish members. Twelve families now participate in the cooperative, including three dads and one grandmother. Parenting workshops are routinely offered.

It's hard to live in the 94107 zip code without encountering the ubiquitous Tony Kelly, a trusted community leader who serves as the Booster's president, and founded Thick Description theater company and Arts Forum, an artist-based political group with more than 1,000 members. Whether arbitrating community-based land use meetings, advising District 10 Supervisor Sophie Maxwell on current affairs, or directing a controversial play at the Thick House, Kelly's life revolves around civic engagement. Born at St. Luke's Hospital in the Mission,

Kelly traveled to New York before returning to Potrero Hill and evolving into what he calls, "an accidental activist." Prioritizing transparency in the political arena, Kelly keeps Booster members well informed of the encroaching office and biotechnology development that's increasingly affecting Potrero Hill.



Just down the Hill, in Dogpatch, Janet Carpinelli keeps her neighbors abreast of a mixed bag of issues. Carpinelli has lived in Dogpatch for more than a quarter of a century, serves as DNA's vice president and chairs GreenTrustSF, a nonprofit she founded to help enhance green infrastructure along the central waterfront. Carpinelli got involved in the Potrero Hill League of Active Neighbors in the early-1980's to fight oversized, poorly designed residential buildings known as "Richmond Specials." Since then she's helped establish the Dogpatch Historic District, worked with the City to acquire Esprit Park, and been involved with the Board of Supervisor's Live-Work and the University of California, San Francisco's (UCSF), Mission Bay Community task forces. She's presently working to preserve the Bluepeter Building, located at 555 Illinois Street, and restore the historic Scott School at 1060 Tennessee Street, the oldest San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)-owned school campus in the City, which currently houses the Omega Boys Club and other nonprofit groups.



Potrero Hill Association of Merchants and Businesses (PHAMB) president Keith Goldstein, who has lived on the Hill since 1974, would like to see more people get involved to help Potrero Hill and Dogpatch grow cohesively. Goldstein does his share of community work. In addition to his PHAMB responsibilities he's joined the Booster's board, and an Eastern Neighborhoods Public Benefits Fund advisor. He co-founded the nonprofit Nepal SEEDS, was past president of Food Runner, and is a board member of Golden Gate Senior Services, which offers services to developmentally disabled senior citizens. Wary of haphazard development, Goldstein looks "forward to more integration between the neighborhoods on the north slopes of the Hill and the residents of the housing projects."



Cris Rys, who has lived on the Hill since 2002, focuses much of his volunteer time on McKinley Square Park. He organized a recent weed cleanup, moderates the McKinley Square Community email group, and is the Neighborhood Parks Council contact for the park. Rys is "looking to get grass back at McKinley Square, and make the hillside dog compatible." The space is a City-designated leash dog area, yet it's covered with foxtail weeds that can be fatal to dogs. His vision for the area surrounding McKinley Square is beautified walking trails, with tree-lined and flower-lined streets, alongside public art.



While watching Board President Dianne Feinstein announce that Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone were murdered in 1978, Hill resident Kepa Askenasy was "struck by the vulnerability of our political system and the humanness that is at its core." Askenasy had just moved to the Hill when the murders occurred. Since then she's advocated on behalf of the community at City Hall. Askenasy is constantly engaged in safety and transportation issues, and attempts to shed light on conflicts of interests between the manifold

parties involved in developing Southeast San Francisco. According to Askenasy, "Community advocacy is never dull, but it's the friendships I've made over the years with my neighbors - their support and their own endless hours of community volunteerism - that have made it so interesting."

Karen Cliffe attended a neighborhood meeting about San Francisco General Hospital's (SFGH) proposed helipad that's currently on hold, and immediately saw the broader implications of bringing non-trauma patients from other counties to an already overcrowded public hospital. As a longtime social worker, she knew that SFGH serves as a safety net for the City's poor and uninsured, and believes that a helipad will undermine that mission. An active member of the Stop the Helipad Coalition, Cliffe has spent many hours forging ties to neighbors who oppose the helipad. According to Cliffe, SFGH and the Department of Public Health need to reassess their public health priorities. For example, San Francisco still has the highest rate of tuberculosis infections in the U.S., and now with the budget cuts, there is even more reason to focus on badly needed basic health care clinics and services.



PHAMB secretary Bradley Vaccaro keeps the tight-knit camaraderie amongst Hill enterprises going strong, helping local businesses network and become more connected to the community. Vaccaro discovered

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Short Cuts

Run, Forest, Run!

Rumors have it that Commissioner of the Environment and Southeast Neighborhood Jobs Initiative Roundtable director **Angelo King** is looking to succeed **Sophie Maxwell** as District 10 supervisor. King's candidacy is apparently being talked-up by local developers. Former State Senator Carole Migden, who is currently parked at the California Integrated Management Board, may also be eyeing the job, as is San Francisco Board of Education commissioner **Hydra Mendoza**, **Just for You** owner **Arienne Landry**, **Thick Description's** **Tony Kelly**, San Francisco Public Utility Commission Deputy Director of Operations **Mohammad Nehru**, and Civil Service Commissioner **Linda Richardson**. Others who have already filed for the race include City-Wide Alcoholism Advisory Board member Cedric Akbar, educator James Calloway, Marie Franklin, the ubiquitous Espanola Jackson, La Vaughan Moore, and realtor Diane Wesley Smith. A lingering question is whether Maxwell, who is termed out next year, will depart her post early for a City job, allowing **Mayor Gavin Newsom** to appoint a temporary replacement, who'd then have a leg-up in the election.

Die, Power Plant, Die!

City leaders are upping the political pressure to close the Potrero Power

Plant. Last month City Attorney, and our neighbor, **Dennis Herrera** filed a law suit against **Mirant Corporation** for not complying with a 1992 City ordinance that requires brick buildings to be retrofitted. According to Herrera, Mirant owns five unoccupied unreinforced brick structures which are framed by masonry, rather than the required wood or steel. The lawsuit's intent, regardless of its merits, is to encourage Mirant to close its dirty, aging plant. A week later Herrera, Maxwell, Newsom, Supervisors David Chiu and Michela Alioto-Pier, and **San Francisco Public Utility Commission General Manager Edward Harrington** sent a letter to the **California Independent System Operator** (Cal-ISO) demanding that the plant's largest unit, three, be closed by the end of this year, and the remaining units, four, five, and six, be shuttered by the end of 2010. It ain't over until it's over though. It'll take significant politicking to get Cal-ISO to agree to let the facility die. Do your part by acting on the closure advertisement that appears later in this issue...In the meantime, SFPUC wants to sell the four combustion turbines that, up until last year, were going to be used to replace the power plant. While the engines may fetch upwards of \$10 million – much needed cash during hard budget times – some advocates wonder whether **Pacific Gas and Electric Company** (PG&E) which supports the City's

latest plan to kill the facility, will remain as compliant without the threat of City-owned generation in the wings...And, speaking of power, managers of the **Trans Bay Cable**, an underwater transmission line that lands in Dogpatch, and which may be the final nail in the Potrero Power Plant's coffin, want to acquire the project from its financially troubled developer, Australian infrastructure firm Babcock & Brown Limited. NMH LP, is a newly formed entity comprised of individual investors who are employed by B&B affiliates. With a guaranteed rate of return based on project costs, who wouldn't want to own a piece of the cable? Community ownership, anyone?

Parks and Parking

Two dozen Potrero Hill residents gathered last month to discuss how to improve McKinley Square. There was round agreement that the park – which receives roughly eight hours a week of care from City gardeners – should be re-seeded with grass, and that better irrigation and drainage systems are needed. Department of Parks and Recreation's **Steve Cismowski** investigate the feasibility of having goats graze the western slope to eat foxtails, with a possible deployment of the hooved weed eaters this year. If the herbivores are used to control foxtails, oak trees and other desired vegetation will need to be fenced for protection...If you like the new pedestrian plaza at 17th and Market streets, you'll be happy to know that a similar one will be created soon at Eighth and 16th streets...New permit parking signs are up in Dogpatch. If you haven't applied for your permit, get on it.

Fire!

Two apartment buildings, located at 509 Potrero Avenue, were damaged by a two-alarm fire last month. Although the blaze was contained within a single bedroom in a three-story residence, the adjacent building suffered exterior damage from the flames. One building resident complained of discomfort, and a couple of firefighters suffered minor injuries, but no hospital treatment was required...According to Bayview District Captain **John Loftus**, the murder rate in the area has dropped by three-quarters since last year: four since November, 2008, compared to 16 during the previous period. While burglaries are up, robberies are down. And all this even before bomb and motorcycle units move into the old Jamba Juice site, which is expected to happen next month.

Hill Resident Passes

Helen Canafax, 63-years-old, died last month after her hip was broken during a purse snatching. The 25th Street resident was a Houma, Louisiana, native and worked as a legal assistant at Gibson, Dunn, & Crutcher. Canafax was dedicated to helping people, volunteering at St. Anthony Foundation and Glide Memorial United Methodist Church, and distributing money, blankets, and food to the homeless. She died of an embolism while recovering from the attack.

Divine Yoga

Divine Essence Yoga has opened up shop at the same Connecticut Street location as **Dr. Allan A. Konce**, an orthopedic surgeon and industrial/occupational specialist. **Laura Hahn**, a certified yoga instructor and Divine Essence's co-founder, was formerly an employee of Konce. Along with Hatha Yoga, Yin Yoga and meditation, Divine Essence offers yoga for kids, pregnant women, and families.

Dynamic Pricing

On the heels of their multi-billion dollar smart meter roll-out – which is scheduled to be completed three years from now – PG&E is asking for another roughly \$160 million to change the way it prices electricity starting as early as next year. Under the utility's dynamic pricing proposal electricity rates would vary depending on demand, thereby better reflecting actual service costs. Many environmental groups applaud the idea as an effective way to discourage the use of dirty power plants. But the California Small Business Association is appalled that almost one out of every five small businesses in the state – 60,000 enterprises – could experience annual bill increases of more than 8 percent under the pricing scheme. The matter is before the California Public Utility Commission.

Reporters Make Good

View reporters **Andrea de Brito** and **Kerry Fleisher** are moving on to bigger – though, really, what's better than the **View**? – things. Bless de Brito for choosing to attend the University of California, (UC) Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. It takes courage to invest time and money in a profession that's allegedly dying, but is in fact more important than ever. Fleisher will also be attending graduate school at U.C. Berkeley, at the Department of City and Regional Planning. The **View** wishes the best to both its soon-to-be alums, and hopes they'll return someday to contribute an article or two.

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Potrero Power Plant Cleanup Plan Slow to Unfold

By Lori Higa

Pacific Gas and Electric Company Presents Slick Slides to Port Commission, but Little Else

At a regular meeting of the Port of San Francisco last month, in a plush meeting room in the Ferry building, Port commissioners, public relation flacks, and representatives from several regulatory agencies gathered to lean about efforts to deal with environmental toxins – some more than a century old – surrounding the Potrero Power Plant.

The toxins are the legacy of decades of industrial activity. In 1901, Claus Spreckles built a small manufactured gas plant (MGP) between his sugar refinery – which operated from 1881 to 1951 – and Warm Water Cove's northern shore. Before the advent of long-distance natural gas pipelines, MGP-produced "town gas" was used for streetlights and industrial processes. The gas was derived from coal or petroleum in a combustion process that resulted in two types of waste: (solid) lampblack and viscous (liquid) coal tar.

Coal tar is denser than water. When released into the environment it moves straight through porous earth, unimpeded by groundwater, until it's stopped by an impermeable geologic barrier. Lampblack and coal tar contain poly-aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are carcinogenic and toxic, and are subject to state and federal cleanup requirements.

Just north of the sugar refinery site, the Potrero Power Plant sits on property that was purchased by a predecessor to Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) in the early-1870s to run a larger MGP facility, which closed in 1930, and was dismantled in 1962. The utility bought Spreckles' MGP in 1903, and closed its operations in 1915. An electric generating plant also operated on the property from 1901 to 1979. That plant was demolished in the 1960s, with pieces of it used as rip-rap. PG&E operated the Potrero Power Plant until 1999, when it sold it to Southern Energy, now Mirant Corporation. As part of the sale agreement, PG&E retained liability for cleaning up the toxins at the plant, sugar refinery and electric generating sites.

In addition to a small shoreline strip, the Port owns Pier 70, a 65-acre former industrial site that has been the subject of a master planning effort for the past two years, and which is directly north of and next to the power plant. MGP-related contamination – including liquid coal tar – affects the shoreline strip, offshore sediments and part of Pier 70, though the toxins don't appear to be spreading. According to the Port, "the [PAH's] chemical characteristics restrict their mobility in the environment."

PG&E has been investigating environmental damage and shoreline contamination at the site since the mid-1990s, though it has yet to test

for contamination from the original MGP site or under the Potrero Power Plant. In 2001, the utility signed a voluntary clean-up agreement with the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Between 2004 and 2008, Port staff submitted several inquiries to the RWQCB identifying unresolved technical issues, resulting from what the agency felt was a lack of objectivity on the part of the utility.

Late last year, PG&E and its consultants sampled offshore sediments. Based on the resulting data, the utility proposed a site conceptual model and remediation plans to the Port and RWQCB. A site conceptual model identifies primary contamination sources, shows how chemicals at the original point of release might move in the environment, and identifies pathways to exposure that may harm human health or the environment. According to Jay Ach, manager of environmental and regulatory affairs in the Port's maritime division, "It's a complex site with many different contaminants and different." According to RWQCB's Steven Hill, the site poses no immediate threats to the public.

In response to the presentations meeting participants seemed cautiously optimistic. "We want to see a cleanup of hazardous waste as the trail and blue greenways" – the final San Francisco portion of which will pass by the site – "are developed," said Association of Bay Area Governments'

Maureen Gaffney. "We are completely supportive of efforts to test for toxins and remediate."

"Your presentation is excellent and very thorough," Port Commissioner Kimberly Brandon exclaimed. "Ever since I joined the commission twelve years ago, I have been hearing about the toxic contamination at the Potrero power plant. I want to know... what's the next step...what kind of remediation needs to be done? And as for Warm Water Cove, what will we find there, what needs to be done?"

"First we will conduct sediment cleanup, which involves dredging and capping the target areas so that nothing gets out that could affect habitat," PG&E's director of environmental remediation Tom Wilson said. Wilson described an interim effort to contain MGP waste from eroding the shoreline by capping and covering the area with rip-rap. He estimated that this action would take place "by the end of '09, depending on permits." In addition, Wilson pointed to the possible erection of an upland barrier wall, which would cut off re-contamination of sediment. As for the cove, Wilson stated "we need to investigate what is there, contact potential responsible parties and ultimately clean it up."

"It's good to see this project moving along," said Port Commissioner Michael Hardeman. Meanwhile, local residents and environmentalists continue the long wait for comprehensive cleanup.

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An Independent Book Store

By Anthony Myers

Potrero Hill stalwart Christopher's Books held a Pick the Pulitzer Winner contest party on the day the prize winners were announced. Curious neighbors filtered in, bringing their dogs, kids and snacks to celebrate the coveted award and one of the City's remaining independent book stores. At stake for the individual who correctly guessed the winner was a Christopher's Books gift certificate. Toni Morrison's *Mercy* and Richard Price's *Lush Life* received the attendees' votes. But, as is now known, Elizabeth Strout's *Olive Kitteridge* won the Pulitzer. According to Tee Minot, Christopher's Books' owner, "It would have been nice to have a big winner, but it was just as much fun to be completely taken by surprise by the announcement of this year's winner."

Ed Rudolph and his dog Buckley attended the party. Rudolph, a Texas Street resident, has lived on the Hill for 35 years, and regularly shops at Christopher's even though he can get cheaper books on-line. "It's making sure you have a community that's livable," Rudolph said, of his purchasing decisions.

Minot has been working against the online tide since the store opened in 1991. "I know people have a choice, and that it really means something when they come in and make a commitment to participate in the local economy," Minot said. Minot — who lives with her partner Lynn and two sons, Nicolas, nine, and Joseph, four — credits her love of books and her neighbors for the store's staying power. "I don't take it for granted. I enjoy getting to know people. I appreciate the social relationships that I've developed over the last 20 years," she said.

One of those relationships is with Potrero Hill Archive Project director Peter Linenthal, who lives above the store. Minot proudly displays some of the Archives' photographs above her bookshelves. "What's not to like about having a bookstore downstairs?" Linenthal said. "She's very community oriented. They have a program where local school kids pick out what books they want and people can buy the book for them."

Minot became the book store's sole proprietor in 1996, after two successful partnerships, the first with the store's originator, Christopher Ellison. Ellison, who no longer lives in the neighborhood, was a venture capitalist before being involved

in a horrific car accident, which prompted him to change his life. "Chris is just a very interesting, smart innovative guy," Minot said. "He was used to helping open small businesses, or providing capital to businesses starting. He wanted to change the direction of his life after this accident. He and his wife thought about what business they could start in the neighborhood they lived in. They both loved books and so they thought, why not a book store?"

When Christopher's opened, Minot was working at Cover to Cover on 24th Street. She used to hang out at Just for You, which, before moving to Dogpatch, was located on 18th Street diagonally across from Ellison's book shop. Before long the two became friends. "We just really connected; I really, really enjoyed talking with him. He was a great conversationalist," Minot said.

About nine months into their friendship Ellison asked Minot to become a partner in the book store. "In May 1992, I became a partner and we were open 10 hours a day, every day. We worked it out so that we had to work six months out of the year and so if one of us wanted to go to New Zealand for a month you could do it," Minot said. "I haven't really taken a break since then."

The store hasn't changed much since it first opened. "We order books and sell books. We are a fixture in the community," Minot said. "We have strong literary and history sections. We have one of the best kids sections in the Bay Area, from picture books to young adult literature. We try to have an eclectic mix. It's not so much what you get in season after season. It's what you keep, it's what you restock."

Minot strives to create a comfortable place for people to come in and browse, and discover that book they weren't expecting to find. Christopher's does a lot of special orders, and the turn around time is good, according to Minot. The store's homey feel and superlative customer service have kept it profitable. "As long as the store can survive on its own, I would say we're in the black. I have a great landlord who's been very supportive. I try to keep my costs down; no fancy business cards or expensive bookmarks," Minot said.

To add to book sale revenues, Minot and her employees offer handmade tchotchkes and domestically made toys. As for Christopher, "he still works at the store part time whenever he can," Minot said.

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Concentra Medical Takes Over Bay Medical

By Sarah Marloff

Two months ago Concentra Medical purchased Bay Medical, and moved from its long-time location in Dogpatch to Potrero Hill. Concentra is a national company, with more than 300 medical centers and 250 workplace clinics. The health care provider specializes in occupational medicine, including immigration physicals, drug tests – roughly 30 administered a day – and performing Federal Aviation Administration required physicals for pilots. “It’s an employer-driven place. Employers can send employees here for all services” Kelly Klug, Center Operations Director, explained. “Its one stop shopping.”

Concentra recently added an urgent care unit, which offers a faster alternative to visiting San Francisco General Hospital’s emergency room. Four physicians are on staff at Concentra’s Connecticut Street location, with two surgical rooms in the building. On average, Concentra sees 130 patients a day, roughly half of whom are walk-ins. According to Klug, the average total time spent at the facility, including waiting and receiving services, is about “an hour.” On a recent weekday the waiting room was full, with several patients asking the desk attendant how much longer before they’d see a doctor.

Concentra charges \$85 for an urgent care visit; \$145 for x-rays, or tests performed at the office; and \$179 for a more complex visit that may include sutures, asthma treatment, foreign object removal, or splinting. Though they accept most insurance coverage – a feature that has earned them praise from Yelp users – Concentra doesn’t take Medicare or Kaiser Permanente. For the uninsured, Concentra offers private pay plans and cash discounts.

Concentra bought the Potrero Hill practice from Allan A. Konce – an orthopedic surgeon and industrial/

occupational specialist – who owned Bay Medical for the past quarter century. “I retained all of Dr. Konce’s staff, and kept the same physicians. They’ve been together for about ten years, and the [Concentra staff] has worked together for five,” Klug said. The transition from Dogpatch to Potrero Hill has been smooth. “We never skipped a beat. We went from business there on Friday to here on Monday.” Concentra was attracted to the Connecticut Street site due to its “more established location...and the building is nicer and bigger.” They are currently remodeling, with the first of three phases completed. Plans include larger rooms, a flat-screen television, and potential expansion to other floors. “Ultimately we want it to be more patient friendly.”

Concentra also offers chiropractic, acupuncture, physical therapy and occupational services, all of which are available for private appointments. “Patient care is our primary goal. I want them to feel like they’re walking into a safe, comfortable, patient-oriented clinic.” Klug keeps snacks, coffee and hot cocoa on hand for clients. Divine Essence Yoga also offers services in the building, though the studio is not affiliated with Concentra.

Klug has worked with Concentra for the past five years and was named Center Administrator of the Year in 2007. She lives in Castro Valley. “I choose to be here. I love this business. I love being the director, and I take ownership in this being a friendly and family-oriented place.”

Concentra is open Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. To learn more about Concentra and their six other Bay Area locations – including Union Square – visit Concentra.com, or attend the Potrero Hill open house, 2 Connecticut Street, featuring complimentary food and beverages, on June 25 from 4 to 7 p.m..

City Attorney Hosts Media Roundtable

By Jonathan Farrell

Special from the San Francisco Neighborhood Newspaper Association

Last month City Attorney Dennis Herrera invited San Francisco’s neighborhood newspapers to City Hall for a roundtable discussion. Herrera told the dozen editors, publishers and reporters present that he was “a newspaper junkie.” Herrera and his staffers Matt Dorsey and Jack Song believe local media provides valuable services to the public. “There are so many important issues and concerns that you neighborhood papers have covered that the mainstream media has barely mentioned,” Herrera said.

The City Attorney’s office provides legal services to the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, San Francisco Unified School District and the City and County of San Francisco’s (CCSF) 94 departments, boards, commissions and offices. Herrera stated that he and his office must remain politically neutral. “We are not allowed to endorse or promote any candidates for office or any ballot initiatives.” According to Herrera, his department, like other municipal agencies, has experienced budget cuts over the past several years. His office had 225 attorneys when he took over seven years ago. Today there are 185.

Herrera’s office has been described by *American Lawyer* magazine as “one of the most aggressive and talented city law departments in the nation.” The City Attorney’s office handles some 8,000 cases a year. Herrera meets weekly with his top managers to hammer out legal strategies and work on legislation, such as the City’s petition to legalize same-sex marriages at the California Supreme Court.

In a response to questions about a recent proposal by Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi to impose fines on the delivery of free newspapers to those who don’t want them, Herrera said that to hinder newspaper distribution would be to quell free speech. According to Herrera, access to newspapers is vital to keeping the public informed. “Many people, especially older generations that are not as tech savvy or simply those who do not have access to a computer, rely on printed material,” said Herrera.

Herrera said his fondest triumph so far was obtaining a \$1 million settlement, which was used as seed money to establish the Willie Mays Boys and Girls Club in Bayview. Other groups and individuals, including the mayor’s office, raised additional funds to make the project a reality.

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Community Works to Save Old Maritime Building

By Lisa Tehrani

The mix of research complexes, parking lots and residential developments being constructed in Mission Bay tend to dwarf the older industrial and residential buildings found a few hundred yards away in Dogpatch and the Central Waterfront. The Bluepeter, once considered a large building in the neighborhood, now hovers in the shadow of the Fibrogen buildings on the adjacent parcel.

High technology and biotechnology, the industries de jour, are steadily replacing Mission Bay's maritime and industrial past. But a group of committed community activists hope to protect at least some of the area's historic infrastructure by revamping a Redevelopment Agency plan to develop a park along Terry Francois Street, across from Kelly's Mission Rock. In particular, they want to save the Bluepeter building — which was originally used for boat construction and repair, and has been vacant for almost a decade — from demolition, and refurbish and restore it to serve as an example of mid-20th century modern industrial architecture. The building is currently slated to be converted into open space as part of the 48 acres of park land contained in the Mission Bay Redevelopment Plan.

Leading the effort is Janet Carpinelli, San Francisco Green Trust chair and a longtime Dogpatch resident. She's part of the Bluepeter Committee, under sponsorship of the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association,



Dogpatch residents gather signatures to save the Bluepeter Building from demolition during last month's Sunday Streets. Photo by Peter Linenthal.

which is working to save the building. The committee wants to "retain the building's connection to Mission Bay's historical bay front maritime industrial uses and provide a link from Mission Creek to the boat clubs and piers in Mission Bay to the historic working waterfront of Pier 70."

A refurbished building could serve as a wholesale and retail fish market, and/or as a market hall that could provide a venue for small scale prepared food and other locally produced organic products, similar to the Ferry Building. "We are trying to get something for locals and workers. So many of the people want something they can relate to that would not be a touristy, upscale operation," Carpinelli explained. "I think it will be a wonderful idea," Potrero

Boosters Neighborhood Association Vice President Dick Millet said. "The university [of California, San Francisco-Mission Bay] is having a produce market now, and they could move it over there. Bluepeter represents buildings of the type that were there and is the only one left beside the old firehouse [on Third Street]."

According to Kelley Kahn, Mission Bay Project Manager for the Redevelopment Agency, the Agency and the San Francisco Port Authority have been in discussions with the committee since October, and are willing to consider the newly proposed use as long as a financially feasible plan to renovate and operate the building can be demonstrated. The Agency has prepared a design alternative for the park that shows retention of the building, and has explored other options, such as retaining small elements of the building in the park. However, Kahn noted that retaining the building would reduce the amount of usable open space, a trade-off that needs to be considered by the community and City policymakers. She also stressed that the Redevelopment Agency doesn't have the resources to restore Bluepeter, which would cost several million dollars.

The Redevelopment Agency is also concerned about the time it could take to raise the necessary funds to rehabilitate the building. According to Kahn, the park has to be open by the end of 2013 to accommodate adjacent development and storm water plans. "The City is doing good faith discussions and is willing to consider the idea and designs as long as the project in no way compromises delivery of the new park," Kahn stated. Ultimately, the design for the park and any plan to restore the building would need to be approved by the Port and

Redevelopment Commissions. Action by the Commissions is slated for late summer, she explained.

While some Dogpatch, Mission Bay, and Potrero Hill residents are eager to preserve the building, other community members are more interested in maintaining open space, and don't want a derelict building to hinder the opening of a funded and promised park. Corinne Woods, Mission Bay Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) member, favors the original park plans. "I cannot see any redeeming features. From the standpoint of where it is and what it is, I think it would be a mistake to keep it, it takes up a third of the footprint and it limits programming options," she said. The CAC hopes the committee will present a business plan and a fundraising schedule with clear deadlines for moving forward at its meeting this month.

The Bluepeter building is owned by the San Francisco Port Authority, which leases the site to the Redevelopment Agency. David Beaupre, the Port's Master Planning Project Manager, stated that his agency supports the original open space plan. The Port Authority is more interested in spending its resources on Pier 70, where an extensive master planning effort is underway for the nationally recognized historic district. It's also considering maintaining a building of similar style and age as the Bluepeter building in what will be called Bay Front Park, just south of Pier 54, for potential use as a restaurant. "We have an agreement with the Redevelopment Agency and City to lease the [Bluepeter] land for 40 years, but the lease stipulates that it will be a park," Beaupre noted. Like the Redevelopment Agency, the Port wants to see the Committee's full proposal before it makes a final decision.

The Bluepeter Committee believes the building would compliment a redeveloped Pier 70. "We see it all as part of the historic working waterfront. It is a small and doable project compared to Pier 70. The Port and Redevelopment Agency should embrace it because the area really needs some soul," Carpinelli stated.

Draft Redevelopment Agency plans show different two models, one that includes the building, along with a half basketball court, sports field, seating for a "chess/checkers grove," and numerous trees and vegetation. The plans without the building provide for a more active grass areas denoted for children's play where the building would have stood.

Continued on Page 14

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University of California, San Francisco-Mission Bay Hosts New Farmers' Market

By Jeanne Stork

Every Wednesday morning around 9, vendors at the new University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) Mission Bay farmers' market set up shop in a bright bevy of red and white-canopied stalls. The market, which launched April 22nd, is a partnership between UCSF and Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association (PCFMA), a nonprofit that operates farmers' markets throughout the Bay Area.

"The idea for the market came about because of the hugely popular farmers' market at UCSF Parnassus that launched in 2008," explained Tamara Villarina, assistant manager of UCSF's Retail Services. "Parnassus has limited space and only three vendors but incredible traffic, so we figured Mission Bay with all of its open space would be an ideal spot for a farmers' market."

According to Villarina, roughly half of the market's visitors are UCSF students and staff, with a quarter people who work in Mission Bay. A smaller number of shoppers come from the surrounding neighborhood, but Villarina hopes that number will grow. "We'd like to add a weekend day eventually which would help that."

Elizabeth Howe, PCFMA Regional Manager, is in charge of the market's operations. On a recent Wednesday she hustled up and down the walkway collecting stall fees, handing out flyers advertising the market and chatting with vendors and shoppers. "I would love to get more businesses in the neighboring area involved and aware that we're here," Howe said.

"Traffic at the market has been a bit slow lately," Howe admitted. "But we're hoping that once all the construction around here ends and people start moving in that things

will pick up." Howe is planning cooking demonstrations throughout the summer; the first one is scheduled for June 24th. When stone fruit and tomatoes arrive in July and

August, the market will host special tasting events. Howe is also looking to bring attention to endangered heritage foods, such as the local Gravenstein apple. In late summer and early fall, she'll be offering a clinic to teach people how to preserve food through the winter.

Upwards of 20 vendors sell organic and conventional fruit and vegetables, as well as salmon, olives, vegan tofu, baked goods and flowers. At the Il Pastaio stand, the handmade ravioli sells out quickly, and vendor Paul Rooney says he's getting a lot of repeat customers. Louise Rossberg, of Double "R" Bees, offers unpasteurized honey and non-fumigated nuts, and encourages people to look at her glass-covered demonstration hive. At the Her Farm stand, visitors can sample sugar cane, and shop for Asian greens, including bitter melon, amaranth and sweet potato leaves.

Ed Ferguson of Schleitewitz Farms, a family-run orchard located near Fresno, is selling some of the first apricots of the season. The farm is pesticide-free, and working toward organic certification. When asked how sales are going he's cautiously optimistic, "Our farm has been around since the 1930s so we're patient. It takes a season or two for a farmers market to really take off."

The market is on Gene Friend Way between Third and Fourth Streets and is open Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. through November 25th. Validated parking is available at the 1650 Third Street parking garage next to the market; visit the market manager's table to get your ticket stamped. For more information: www.pcfma.com.



After Sara Moss and her family brought home Lucky (right) from a shelter in Novato, her friend Harry Fleisher was so smitten that his family raced northward to fetch Lucky's sister, Olympia (left). The two were happily reunited after a few weeks apart, and now visit one another regularly. Photograph by Paula Fleisher.

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Firehouse 37

Continued from Front Page

guaranteed to show up when you dial 911 – police response depends on the nature of the request – the San Francisco Fire Department is required to respond to a call within five minutes, whether for a broken nail, a bad dream, asthma attack or a fire. About once a month, the firefighters at Station 37 get a real good – or real bad – fire.

"We are a standing army. You want your army prepared to be able to do whatever it's tasked to do at its max. We can't schedule a fire," said Kevin Garry, the son of Irish immigrants whose father was also a firefighter. Garry, Station 37's driver, grew up on Potrero Hill and knows the streets well. "My dad was a fireman and I saw how happy those guys were going to work everyday. I thought about sitting in a cubicle designing plumbing diagrams..." said Garry, adding that many years ago, being a cop or a firefighter – considered undesirable employment at the time – were among the only jobs recent immigrants could get. Today, the profession runs in the family. Station 37's Lieutenant Leo Tingin's wife is a San Francisco firefighter and Andrew Birkhoff's sons will soon take the firefighting exam.

Firehouse 37 consists of three stories, and is equipped with two work-out rooms and a dorm room with a dry sauna. Typically, a day at the station begins at 8:30 a.m. with breakfast and the shift's assignments. Tingin, a firefighter since 1994, makes sure that there are enough firefighters – at least four – in the firehouse. On this day in April there was a vacancy. Andrew Birkhoff, a paramedic firefighter from station 7 on 19th and Folsom streets, was tasked to Potrero Hill to fill in as the hose man, responsible for carrying the hose into a smoke-filled building and making sure it doesn't kink up along the way. Birkhoff had already worked an overnight shift, but was

happy for the overtime.

A firefighter's normal workweek lasts 48 hours or more. Part of the quid pro quo of working overtime is sharing the wealth by contributing to the house fund, a long-time ritual among firefighters. Some household items, such as stoves and refrigerators, are supplied by the City, but firefighters pay for their own food, pots, pans, workout machines and maintenance, and barbeques, among other things.

Before the driver starts the engine and heads out into the streets, the four firefighters get busy sweeping and doing maintenance, mostly associated with the fire truck. Tingin sounds a bell ten minutes before starting the big red engine. When the time comes, everyone puts on their gear and gets in. The first task for this day is a fire drill – a monthly Fire Department requirement – at Daniel Webster Elementary School.

After the drill the firefighters proceed to check-out Esprit Park, a recently constructed condominium complex located in Dogpatch. The development is so new that only around one-third of its 142 units are occupied. Station 37's job is to make sure that the building has proper exits and elevators, and sufficient water outlets. The men immediately notice a relic from the past; an old fire safety door on the historic seismically retrofitted building, once designed to melt and slam shut in case of a fire, preventing flames from spreading. "Hopefully it's decorative," said Birkhoff. "These things are friggin' dangerous because you're in there fighting a fire and suddenly your exit gets closed. Boom!"

San Francisco firefighters face particular challenges. In high density cities with little or no space between buildings, fire spreads quickly and can easily take out a whole block. The City's firefighters, unlike many rural or smaller city firefighters, must be especially aggressive in the way they attack fires, fighting the flames from inside buildings. Fire trucks are akin to a giant tool box on wheels. They

can be used to scale buildings, and to open them up, letting the smoke out so firefighters can see what's going on inside.

"Other departments will stand outside and throw water on the building and won't even go in. They'll let that house go. It's a sacrifice and nobody gets hurt," said Garry. In historic San Francisco, Birkhoff explained, insulation was once more expensive than fuel, so people just burned coal. As a result fire often has free reign to move up and down between the air space in un-insulated walls.

San Francisco's need for aggressive attack creates a higher health and safety risk to the City's firefighters. On average, 180 U.S. firefighters die each year, explained Birkhoff, who has been a firefighter and paramedic for a decade and a half, and who volunteers at the Burning Man festival every year. On this morning, his girlfriend sent him a text message telling him to have a safe shift and look after himself. It's been two months since Birkhoff suffered third and second degree burns on his legs from a fire that spread under a Felton Street building's floorboards and above its ceiling. "There aren't as many fires as there used to be but they're far worse than they used to be. The types of materials that are in buildings burn hotter, burn faster, and move faster," said Birkhoff. "The reality is, I've seen two fires I didn't think I was going to get out of."

In addition to burns, firefighters deal with sudden and prolonged exposure to carbon and other toxic chemicals. According to Birkhoff, firefighters often die of heart disease in their sixties. Today a greater number of toxics may contribute to a slew of rare cancers among firefighters. "Since I've been here, there have been a dozen firefighters who have come up with weird cancers. One was a triathlete, the picture of health, verging on vegan," said Birkhoff. "He came down with kidney cancer, which is highly rare."

Over the last decade changes have been made to reduce health risks among firefighters. Until about twelve years ago, drivers would start up engines and trucks in their firehouses, filling the room with diesel smoke. Today, a tube connects from the engine's tailpipe to the ceiling, releasing diesel emissions into the outside air. Still, particulates line the firehouse's surfaces. In 2007, the San Francisco Fire Department switched some of its vehicles to biodiesel, but the fuel slowed the engines down when going uphill, said Tingin.

The Station 37 firefighters are growing a garden on their roof, which has 360 degree City views. Fresh produce will cut costs, provide for a healthier diet, and is sustainable, said Garry. Carrots and greens are sprouting, with zucchini on its way. Firefighters cook their homemade meals on a rotating basis, another

firehouse tradition. That means a trip to the Safeway at the Potrero Center, where almost every worker seems to know them by name. "Ordering food is frowned upon. It's a bonding thing, a camaraderie thing, it's about sharing," said Garry, the cook on a recent shift. Jokes fly across the kitchen during meal prep. Victor Lubet's – who worked as a carpenter until he became a firefighter ten years ago at the age of forty – decision to make tater tots – normally a breakfast food – for lunch the other day is the subject of repetitive but playful mockery. "They get really picky like that. I'm thinking: I want to serve them tater tots again," said Lubet. "It's the little things that count."

Firehouse meals – a recent lunch consisting of a delicious egg salad sandwich, leftover lamb spaghetti, and fresh pineapple salad – take time and planning. In larger firehouses, like Birkhoff's station 7, a crew of 17 enables each firefighter to cook roughly every six weeks. "There is a perception that we're sitting around a lot. But even though we're all chill right now, in a moment's notice we could be crawling down a darkened hallway looking for someone," said Birkhoff.

In a recent fire Birkhoff helped fight, panic set in when additional fighters entered the building just when it was time to retreat. Temperatures were so high that the smoke was close to combusting. In large fires, communication is nearly impossible through air masks that muffle sound and smoke that blocks vision. At that point, said Birkhoff, you just pull your hood over your head as far as you can, pull your arms over your face, and make sure the fire doesn't get trapped under your fire-resistant clothes.

"Most fires are started because of poor maintenance; candles, smoking in bed, leaving the stove on. Without smoke detectors, most people die. Carbon monoxide has no taste or odor to it. It gradually fills the room. One of the first things that happens is lethargy," said Birkhoff. "It's a bad time when you put a hose line to the ceiling and it gets hotter. You're cooking yourself, boiling yourself," said Garry.

Despite the reputation that firefighters primarily fight fires, the majority of calls are for medical issues. "We will see more shit in one week than anyone we'll see in their whole lifetime," said Birkhoff over the lunch table. "Each of us has seen more dead bodies than we should. Have you seen someone decapitated before? I've seen three that stick in my mind. I picked up a motorcycle helmet and the guy's face had the uh-oh face on."

"In between all the shootings, stabbings, car accidents, burning has got to be the worst way to go," said Tingin. "I've been to two or three

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Renaissance at Daniel Webster Elementary School

By Peter Linenthal

It's impossible to ignore the renaissance that's flowering at Daniel Webster Elementary School, located at Missouri and 20th streets. Last year a bright new paint job appeared, accompanied by a mural. Street trees were planted, followed by a garden along Missouri. Most recently, another garden has suddenly sprouted along the school's south wall.

It all started in 2005. Facing a budget crisis, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) identified schools that could be either closed or merged due to declining enrollment or low test scores. Daniel Webster was on that list. At the same time, long-time Hill resident and former mayor Art Agnos asked neighbor Jennifer Betti what would keep young parents like her in the neighborhood. "Good schools!" she answered.

The prospect of losing a neighborhood school, coupled with the possibility of making it better, energized a group of Hill parents. Building off of the Potrero Hill Parent Association email listserv, a new group was formed: PREFund, the Potrero Resident's Education Fund. PREFund persuaded the school board to keep the campus open by presenting a list of specific improvements they would make: transforming bungalows located in the school yard into a preschool; adding a Spanish immersion program to the kindergarten to fifth grade options; and spearheading a much needed facility make-over.

The trees were funded by PREFund

and planted by Friends of the Urban Forest. PREFund raised almost \$500,000 to renovate the bungalows to accommodate Potrero Kids at Daniel Webster Preschool or PKDW, a licensed preschool, which was built with the help of Jackson Liles Architecture, Azul Works Construction Company, and Rebuild Together San Francisco (RTSF), among others.

RTSF, which was launched after the 1989 quake with the goal of working with other organizations to help rebuild San Francisco, partnered with 150 volunteers from Ernst and Young, Charles Schwab and Dreamworks, to paint the school and mural, clean out years of junk, and build the garden. Concrete recycled from paving that was broken up to make way for the garden has been dubbed "urbanite" and is being used for garden's low retaining walls.

The efforts have paid off, with enrollment at Daniel Webster increasing. As PREFund puts it, "Our neighborhood gem is no longer hidden!" According to the school's principal, Moraima Machado, "The changes are fantastic; the students and staff are happier. When you see an environment that looks nice it means there are people who care. All schools should have that. The support of communities can help make it happen."

For more about the school's transformation check-out, www.prefund.org. For information on the K-5 Spanish immersion program, check out www.dwspanish.blogspot.com.



Toshia Holloway (standing), daughter La'sha-nea Smith (seated), son Jasiah Tambunting (left) and cousin Geontay (right) worked on Webster's new garden. Photo by Peter Linenthal.

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June 2009 Neighborhood Free Days

NEIGHBORHOOD	ZIP CODE	FREE DAYS
Chinatown, Tenderloin, Downtown, SOMA, Potrero, Treasure Island, Mission Bay	94103, 94107, 94130, 94111, 94105, 94108, 94104, 94102, 94158	June 5, 6, 7
Castro, Noe Valley, Diamond Heights, Miraloma Park, Cole Valley, Haight	94117, 94114, 94131	June 12, 13, 14

Check the complete schedule on www.calacademy.org or call 415.379.8000 to confirm your Neighborhood Free Days.

Each visiting adult must prove residency by showing a driver's license or a utility bill. On each scheduled date, only residents from the specified zip codes will be admitted free of charge.

As part of Bank of America's longtime support of museums and local educational programs, the Academy offers Neighborhood Free Days to San Francisco residents.

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Tyson on Tyson: A Fighter's Struggles

By Greg Thomas

In the days after I watched *Tyson*, the former heavyweight champion and his furious fists haunted my dreams. I couldn't shake the fear of a pair of boxing gloves suddenly and brutally pummeling me. There's plenty of evidence in Mike Tyson's new self-centered documentary to justify that anxiety. The man was an beast in his day, both in and out of the ring.

Tyson is a voyeuristic roller coaster ride with one of America's most brash and controversial celebrities of yesteryear. The film delivers a critically reflective chronicle of a man at war with himself. Universal binaries of the human psyche – love and hate, fear and confidence, pride and vulnerability – violently clash inside Tyson's head and pour out of his mouth and his fists. He admits as much in the opening moments that he suffers from "chaos of the mind."

Tyson, both man and film, is chockfull of conflicting inner voices, a motif that helps drive his life story. He's self-contradictory: his lispy, high-pitched voice and rambling speech a perfect contrast to his unbridled force and masterful precision as a fighter. The film's director, James Toback, pits video clips of Tyson's earlier days – the rise and glory – with footage of his subsequent unraveling.

In his formative years as a teenage

crook in Brownsville, Brooklyn, Tyson developed an uncontrollable rage that only his trainer and surrogate father, Cus D'Amato, was able to discipline; by channeling it into boxing. D'Amato's expertise, crossed with Tyson's brute strength and absolute devotion to the craft, form the basis for Tyson's early fame and success. But D'Amato's life was cut short just as Tyson solidified his reign as world champion, a blow from which Tyson never fully recovered. From that point forward his life devolved into a series of missteps and poor decisions, each more devastating than the last.

Flash forward to 2008. In an unprecedented bout of composure, the overweight, over-the-hill legend sits calmly in a sunny seaside home and tries to explain himself to the camera. In between emotionally charged moments in which he grapples with past demons, Tyson's stream-of-consciousness delivery prompts unintentional and amusing punch lines. While the film is by no means an objective portrayal of Tyson's successes, failures and struggles – his is almost the only voice throughout the film – the boxer's scatterbrained babbles are rooted in a genuine desire to understand himself and successfully navigate the world. The film hinges on his honest fight for a suitable identity, a process

driven by Tyson's insights, which are, more often than not, illuminating and compelling.

At first glance, the introspection smacks of an attempt to justify Tyson's past indiscretions – which include drug addition, an ugly public divorce, and a sexual assault conviction – but he never apologizes for who he is or what he's done. Despite his failures to redeem himself, the sincerity of his self-analysis redeems the film.

Toback successfully humanizes the bloodthirsty image Tyson left us with after his 1997 ear-gnawing bout with Evander Holyfield. In doing so, the filmmaker forces us to ask ourselves whether we can forgive the pain Tyson has inflicted both in and out of the ring. With no one else to turn to, Tyson turns to the camera, seeking redemption and possibly acceptance.

By the film's end it's tough to understand Tyson's motives. Sympathy may be too much to ask, but his harsh introspection and forthright delivery suggest more than an elaborate publicity stunt. Much like Tyson's life, and the lives of many professional boxers, *Tyson* begins strong, fast and exciting, and closes on a steady diminuendo in which the boxer cavalierly concludes, while slumping into a comfy couch, "What I've done in the past is history, and what I do in the future is a mystery."

Bluepeter

Continued from Page 9

If given the green light, the Bluepeter Committee plans to develop two nonprofit organizations, one that would raise funds and manage the reconstruction project; the other to operate the market hall and/or fish market. The building needs several improvements, including a seismic upgrade, new heating, plumbing, safety and electrical systems, as well as new floors, windows, roof and doors, which will cost upwards of \$3 million. Preliminary architectural drawings were produced by Jackson Liles Architecture, and funded by Topher Delaney, a prominent landscape architect and artist with a studio across from the Bluepeter. Local companies, such as Everest Waterproofing and Sheedy Drayage, have pledged their support for the project. Numerous other entities have also signed up to help with the preservation effort, including San Francisco Architectural Heritage, Potrero Boosters Neighborhood Association, Mariposa Boat Club, and the Burning Man Project.

During last month's Sunday Streets event, which passed in front of the Bluepeter, the committee gathered upwards of 150 signatures. "I am in support of the area's changes, but also like to preserve old buildings. I want to support Bluepeter as a way to preserve the history of the area," said Dogpatch resident Vanessa Ross Aquino.



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Kids on the Block

By Stacey Bartlett



- Happy fourth birthday to Annabel Bay Bartlett, the most spectacular fairy in our kingdom! Love, Mama, Daddy, Henry & Black Kitty



Five-year old Dalton Krogan's drawing of the City skyline was shown at the 23rd Annual Young at Art Exhibit at the de Young Museum last month.

Bowie McKay Winkel turned one on May 31. Happy birthday, love mommy and daddy!



Sara Moss turns eight on June 30!



Shelby Liles will be five years old on June 9th! She'll celebrate at Children's Fairyland with a blue cake with dolphins on it! Her big brother Jasper, age eight and a half, will assist if she needs help blowing out all those candles.



Jesse Griffiths celebrates his 1st birthday on June 4th. Happy Birthday Jesse!

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PHAMB's Famous 2010 Potrero Hill Neighborhood Guide

is now in the planning stages. Businesses must renew and pay their membership dues to keep a listing. Not a member? Join now so your business can be included. Ad space is still available including larger ads of half and full page sizes.



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Next meeting: June 9, 2009

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Parks

Continued from Front Page

public use, according to Wertheim. Historically streets were considered to be a significant part of the public realm, where people gathered and interacted. With modern auto dependency that changed, and streets are now associated with transportation and movement rather than community interaction. The Planning Department has recommended converting the streets surrounding Townsend Circle and Wolfe's Café, at 16th and Irwin streets. There's also a push to develop green connector streets, consisting of avenues with "wider sidewalks, places to sit and enjoy, significant landscaping and gracious street trees that would provide linkages between larger open spaces," as described in the Showplace Square Area Plan.

The street conversion model was recently touted by Mayor Gavin Newsom when he opened the Castro Commons at 17th Street and Castro. The plaza was carved out of an intersection using a few bolsters and planters. "That was the first time in memory that the City took a public right-of-way and made it a park," said Wertheim. "That is the kind of thing that would be anticipated in Showplace."

Woods thinks that converting underused streets is a good idea, but that it's not nearly enough. "[The Wolfe's Café plaza] is not exactly a place you could bring your family," she said. She'd like to see where larger spaces, such as recreational

fields, could be sited. According to Millet, open space required as part of developments should not be considered under the plan. "People that want to go out and play soccer are not going to be able to do that on a roof garden or a balcony."

Another area that may be used by Showplace Square residents is Jackson Playground. Planners have floated the idea of renovating the park and widening it to the west. Wertheim explained that while the park serves the entire City for softball games, it could potentially be expanded as a more community-oriented space, using benches and picnic tables. However, Millet doesn't think park expansion is possible, since the adjacent land is owned by a developer with plans to construct housing.

Channel Street is also being eyed for possible parkland use. The publicly-owned land that's adjacent to Golden Gate Disposal and Recycling on 7th Street is currently fenced off and vacant. That street could serve as an extension to the Mission Creek park area across the railroad tracks. However, a deal is in the works to give the parcel to the garbage company in exchange for land in Visitation Valley associated with the former Schlage Lock site. Given these types of side-deals, some community members are wary that a public participation process will result in comprehensive open space solutions.

To learn more about the Showplace Square open space planning process visit <http://showplace.sfplanning.org>.

It's Time to Shut Down the Plant

Estimated 2010 supply shortfall in San Francisco, assuming the two largest supply sources go down simultaneously, without the Potrero Power Plant: 25 megawatts (MW)
Chance of that happening: .001 percent

Total capacity of the Potrero Power Plant: 362 MW

Total capacity of emergency back-up generators located in San Francisco: 316 MW

Total capacity of emergency generators expected to be in-place by 2010: 356 MW

San Francisco's 2010 peak electricity demand, estimated in 2003: 1,079 MW

San Francisco's 2010 peak electricity demand, estimated in 2009: 967 MW

Number of inefficient refrigerators located in low-income SF households: 33,243

Annual electricity savings if all of these fridges were replaced: 1.2 MW

Number of small San Francisco businesses which have agreed to reduce their electricity use during a grid emergency: 71

Amount Potrero Hill families say they'd be willing to reduce their electricity use to close the Potrero Power Plant: 7 percent.

PLEASE CONTACT CAL-ISO'S BOARD CHAIR MASON WILRICH AND LET HIM KNOW YOU WANT THE PLANT CLOSED BY MAY 1. Just fill in and post this ad.



Dear Chairman Wilrich,

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Mason Wilrich, Chair, Board of Governors,
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arts

June**Family: Sunday Drop-in Art at the Jewish Museum.**

The hands-on fun inspires children to learn more about the exhibits on display in the galleries. Sundays, 1 to 3 p.m. Free. Contemporary Jewish Museum, 736 Mission Street, between 3rd and 4th streets. For more information: www.thecjm.org or 655.7800

June 5 - 18**Film: 6th Annual Another Hole in the Head Film Festival**

The folks that bring you fantastic films every year for the San Francisco Indie Fest and the Doc Fest are back with a vengeance with Another Hole in the Head Festival. The weeklong festival is chockfull of sci-fi, horror, fantasy, madness and mayhem, with almost 40 great new films from the United States, Japan, Thailand, England, Brazil, Canada, Australia and a few from our own back yard. The Fest opens with a new film by ever-prolific Takashi Miike, *Crows Zero*, and closes with local filmmaker Jonathan Lewis' *Black Devil Doll*. For the two weeks in between they'll be night after night of awesome grind house madness. Oh, and some plays and parties as well. Tickets: \$10 in advance; \$11 at the door; \$100 festival passes available in limited supply. Venues: Cell Space, The Roxie and The Great Star Theater. For more information: www.sfindie.com.

June 6**Community: Neighborhood Parks Council 10K Walk**

Join Adah Bakalinsky, author of *Stairway Walks* in San Francisco and the Neighborhood Parks Council (NPC) in celebrating World Environment Day with a 10k walk along the San Francisco waterfront. Starting at

Rincon Park Promenade, the walk will showcase the planned Blue Greenway Trail, the portion of the waterfront from China Basin to Candlestick Point that will complete San Francisco's Bay Trail. NPC is asking for a donation of \$1 or more per kilometer. 10 a.m. Rincon Park Promenade, Embarcadero between Howard and Folsom. To RSVP for the walk email achordia@sfnpc.org. For more information: www.sfnpc.org/adahwalk

June 9

Environment: Ask a Scientist
Among the myriad challenges faced by the modern world here are two biggies: finding a clean, sustainable energy source, and safely disposing of nuclear waste. Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's Laser Inertial Fusion-Fission Energy (LIFE) project has the potential to resolve both. LIFE is a hybrid technology that combines the best aspects of nuclear fusion, a clean, safe, and virtually unlimited energy source, with nuclear fission, a carbon-free, reliable energy technology in use around the world. By burning nuclear waste for its fuel, LIFE would provide the added advantage of shrinking the planet's stockpile of spent nuclear fuel. Learn about the benefits and challenges of this promising new technology with Jeff Latkowski, Chief Engineer, LIFE Project. 7 p.m. Free. Axis Café, 1201 8th Street, between 16th and Irwin streets. For more information: 437.2947 or www.askascientistSF.com.

June 10

Environment: California's Green Economy and Energy Future
Join California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) Senior Policy Analyst Kristin Ralff-Douglas to discuss why clean energy makes

for smart economic stimulus, and how California is a model for energy efficiency. Speakers include F. Noel Perry, founder of Next 10 and creator of the 2009 California Green Innovation Index; Tracey Grose, Vice President for Research and Strategic Development for Collaborative Economics, Inc.; and David Roland-Holst, Professor, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Berkeley. 1 to 2:30 p.m. Free. CPUC Auditorium, 505 Van Ness Avenue, between Golden Gate and McCallister. For more information: www.cpuc.ca.gov

June 12 - 14**Fun: 6th Annual RoboGames**

RoboGames invites the best minds from around the world to compete in more than 70 events. Combat robots, walking humanoids, soccer bots, sumo bots, and even androids that do kung-fu. Some robots are autonomous, some are remote controlled, but they're all cool! The stands will be filled with people watching 340-pound robots shoot flames and smash into each other, and androids cart-wheeling down a soccer field. Anyone can compete – even you! Noon to 7 p.m. Fort Mason Festival Pavilion, entrance on Marina Boulevard and Buchanan Street. \$20, \$15 for kids Seven to 17; free for kids under five and active-duty military. For more information: <http://robogames.net>.

June 16**Community: Storytelling**

Join host Susan Ford for an evening of storytelling, poetry, and spoken word featuring Bill Alvarado, Kate Frankel, Marie Minder, Leigh Radke, and Ron Jones. Open Mic to follow. Come join us and bring a story or poem. 7 p.m. Free. Farley's, 1315 18th Street. For more information: www.farleyscoffee.com.

June 18 - August 18**Art: The J.Street Project**

Artist Susan Hiller's chance encounter with a Berlin street called Judenstrass (Jews Street) in 2002 was the unexpected experience that set into motion an arduous three year journey to find and photograph every street in Germany with the prefix Juden (Jews) in its name, a surprising 303 sites in all. Hiller was initially shocked, but mostly confused, by this strangely ambiguous commemoration of people who had been exterminated not so long ago. The J.Street Project includes Hiller's more than 300 color photographs of busy boulevards, quiet country alleys and run-of-the-mill suburban streets, as well as a film. 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. (closed Wednesdays); Thursday 1 p.m. – 8 p.m. \$10 adults, \$8 students and senior citizens with a valid identification, and \$5 on Thursdays after 5 p.m., youth 18 and under free. Contemporary Jewish Museum, 736 Mission Street, between 3rd and 4th streets. For more information: www.thecjm.org or call 415.655.7800

June 18**Music: Live at Farley's**

Swing by for an interesting night of jazz originals, standards, and improvisation, played by Bay Area legends Terry Haggerty, guitar (Sons of Champlin), Randy Craig, piano (Pickle Family Circus, The Mime Troupe), Steven Strauss, bass, and Peter Tucker, drums. 8 p.m. Free. Farley's, 1315 18th Street. For more information: www.farleyscoffee.com.

June 20**Health: Detox with the Doctor**

Dr. Erika Horowitz will lead a 10-day group cleanse. \$199 pays for the class, handouts, and products. Sign up with a friend and you each get \$10 off. 2 p.m. San Francisco Natural Medicine. Preregistration required: 643.6600.

June 21

Father's Day: Free Cuppa Joe for Dad
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June 12th	744 Alabama St "Important Enigmatic New Works Full of Mystery and Wonder" Sharaine Bell, David King, Bill Samios
June 19th	2425 17th St "Death by Color" Cameron Chernoff, Catherine Reed
July 10th	744 Alabama St "Urban Birdseye: Quilts, Places and Other Things" Summer Lee, Mac McNamara, Karen Slovak, Colleen Stockmann
July 17th	2425 17th St "Body Language: figurative art speaks" Emily Citraro, Georgianne Fastaia, Romulo R Nisnisan Jr (ROM)
August 14th	744 Alabama St "Arts Ecclectic" MacKenzie Davis, Mary Lou Hanley, Michelle Jader, Traci Zaretzka
August 21st	2425 17th St "Line of Sight" Charles Keatts, Steven Scotten, Tim Svenonius
September 11th	744 Alabama St "Adventures in Photography" Keith Gidlund, Walter Hanley, Don Ross

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& ENTERTAINMENT

June 2009

for smart economic stimulus, and how California is a model for energy efficiency. Speakers include F. Noel Perry, founder of Next 10 and creator of the 2009 California Green Innovation Index; Tracey Grose, Vice President for Research and Strategic Development for Collaborative Economics, Inc.; and David Roland-Holst, Professor, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Berkeley. 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Free. CPUC Auditorium, 505 Van Ness Avenue, between Golden Gate and McCallister. For more information: www.cpuc.ca.gov

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Nonprofit SFArtsED, www.sfartsed.org, launches its summer arts program at Horace Mann Middle School on June 15. Above, summer students Nolan Ramirez and Anisa Henry perform. Photograph by Karen Steffens.



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 PARAGON
REAL ESTATE GROUP

Largest GLBT Film Festival in the World Opens this Month

By Jim Van Buskirk

The San Francisco International Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Film Festival, Frameline 33, opens on June 18, with 219 feature-length and short films on tap. Opening night's *An Englishman In New York*, a sequel to the 1975 British television film *The Naked Civil Servant*, showcases John Hurt reprising his role as the flamboyant Quentin Crisp. With screenings at the Castro Theatre, Roxie Film Center, Victoria Theatre, and Rialto Cinemas Elmwood, Frameline 33 is the world's longest-running and largest GLBT festival.

Forever's Gonna Start Tonight, directed by Michelle Lawler, a loving portrait of Vicki Marlene, a septuagenarian still strutting onstage, will be shown on June 19. The film mixes reminiscences of the hard-living and hard-loving transgender drag performer with footage of her legendary performances at Aunt Charlie's in the Tenderloin. The film's producer Kim Klausner, with former partner Debra Chasnow, co-directed the groundbreaking 1984 documentary *Choosing Children*, which was recently selected to be preserved by the prestigious Outfest Legacy Project.

Chasnow, who won an Academy Award in 1992 for *Deadly Deception*, is represented in this year's program by *Straightlaced: How Genders Got Us All Tied Up*, to be screened on June 26. Her interviews with young people about their experiences with sexual diversity, tolerance and self-confidence, is the latest entry in her Respect For All Project, which includes award-winners *It's Elementary* and *That's a Family*.

Fawn Yacker, who served as cinematographer on Chasnow's films, directed and produced, with Dee Mosbacher, *Training Rules*. This powerful documentary, which screens June 21, follows Penn State University sophomore Jennifer Harris as she sues, with assistance from San Francisco-based National Center for Lesbian Rights, homophobic women's basketball coach Rene Portland for

harassing and threatening players, going so far as throwing some off the team and stripping them of their college scholarships.

The Festival celebrates San Francisco's rich filmmaking community by bestowing its 2009 Frameline Award to brothers George and Mike Kuchar. Jennifer Kroot's feature documentary, *It Came from Kuchar*, about the lives and careers of the legends of underground cinema who inspired and influenced generations of filmmakers, will be screened. *Raging Grannies: The Action League*, is award-winning director Pam Walton's look at a group of older women's use of activism and street theater in support of various progressive causes. In *Fruit Fly* - the latest offering from H.P. Mendoza, writer, composer, and star of *Colma: The Musical* - a Filipina performance artist moves into a Mission District artist's commune, where she encounters a world of colorful characters.

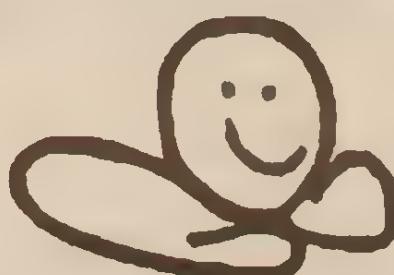
Bay Area filmmakers are well represented in the always-popular shorts programs. Dominic Angerame, Executive Director of Canyon Cinema, the preeminent distributor of independently produced non-narrative films, curated Canyon Cinema: Queer Underground. Desi del Valle and Hollie Lemarr co-directed the gentle love story *Back to Life*; local drag stars Fauxnique and Peaches Christ star in *Get Happy*; and Katastrophe creatively reenvisions a Andy Warhol drama in *Big Deal*.

Other showcased films include Canadian queer cinema visionary John Greyson's experimental documentary *Fig Trees*; Nancy Kissam's deadpan Southern Gothic *Drool*; Pascal-Alex Vincent's debut *Give Me Your Hand*, about conflict and camaraderie between twin brothers; *Hollywood, Je T'Aime*, Jason Bushman's look at a Parisian out of his element in Los Angeles; and *I Can't Think Straight*, Punam Shaidai's vision of Shamim Sarif's story of women's love in apartheid-era South Africa.

For more information: www.frameline.org.

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Firehouse 37

Continued from Page 11

shootings in the projects where you're there and they're still shooting. They'll come up to you and say I shot that guy, don't help him. And we say we're just here doing our job," said Garry. He also remembers a man who was trying to steal live copper wire by the Ramp on Third Street. When firefighters arrived on the scene, they found pieces of hand everywhere. The man had taken off running with no hands.

He recalls a woman who was driving and tried to release a mosquito from her car, only to fall out of the car and get run over by her own moving vehicle. She lived. There was a man who was backing up a rental car with his door open. When he fell out of the car, he was run over. He died. There are old people who die peacefully, surrounded by loved ones. And there are old ladies who live in hovels with all of their belongings piled to the ceilings, without plumbing, water, or electricity, eating cat food.

"One call I'll never forget was for a young girl, she was probably twelve. She had something simple that was wrong with her, like an earache. And somehow it got more complicated and she saw the doctor and the doctor told her to take some simple medications. Then it just spiraled out of control. She ended up having a seizure. That's when we arrived on scene. And she actually died. That was a tough one," remembered Lubet.

"One thing I've learned in the Fire Department is that reality is far more

descriptive and unbelievable than movies or fiction," said Tingin, who spent several weeks fighting massive northern California forest fires two years ago. "Just the condition that some people live in; you're like there's no way I could have thought of that one. It happened but there's no way in my mind I could picture that happening without actually seeing it."

Due to the City's budget problems, this year they'll be no Fire Academy graduates. Cuts could also decrease the number of new trucks, as well as the quantity of annual firehouse inspections. "With budget cuts and health care the way it is, we are the bottom of the barrel. We catch everybody that falls through the cracks," said Birkhoff. "A lot of times we go on calls that are non-emergent, but they don't have any other options; they don't have a clinic, a private doctor, or they don't have insurance, so the medical conditions don't get taken care of. So while those situations are rising, our staffing is not matching that greater demand."

The station 37 firefighters wrap up their workday with a workout and dinner. But before that, budget concerns prompt them to pick up a handful of flyers to distribute around the neighborhood. The Save Our Firehouses Campaign, organized by the firefighters' union - Local 798 - began a door hanger drop in April to let people know of the dangers of shutting firehouses. Fortunately, according to the firefighters at 37, their firehouse probably won't close down. It's too centrally located.

Emily Jeanette Price and Robert Macon Phillips III



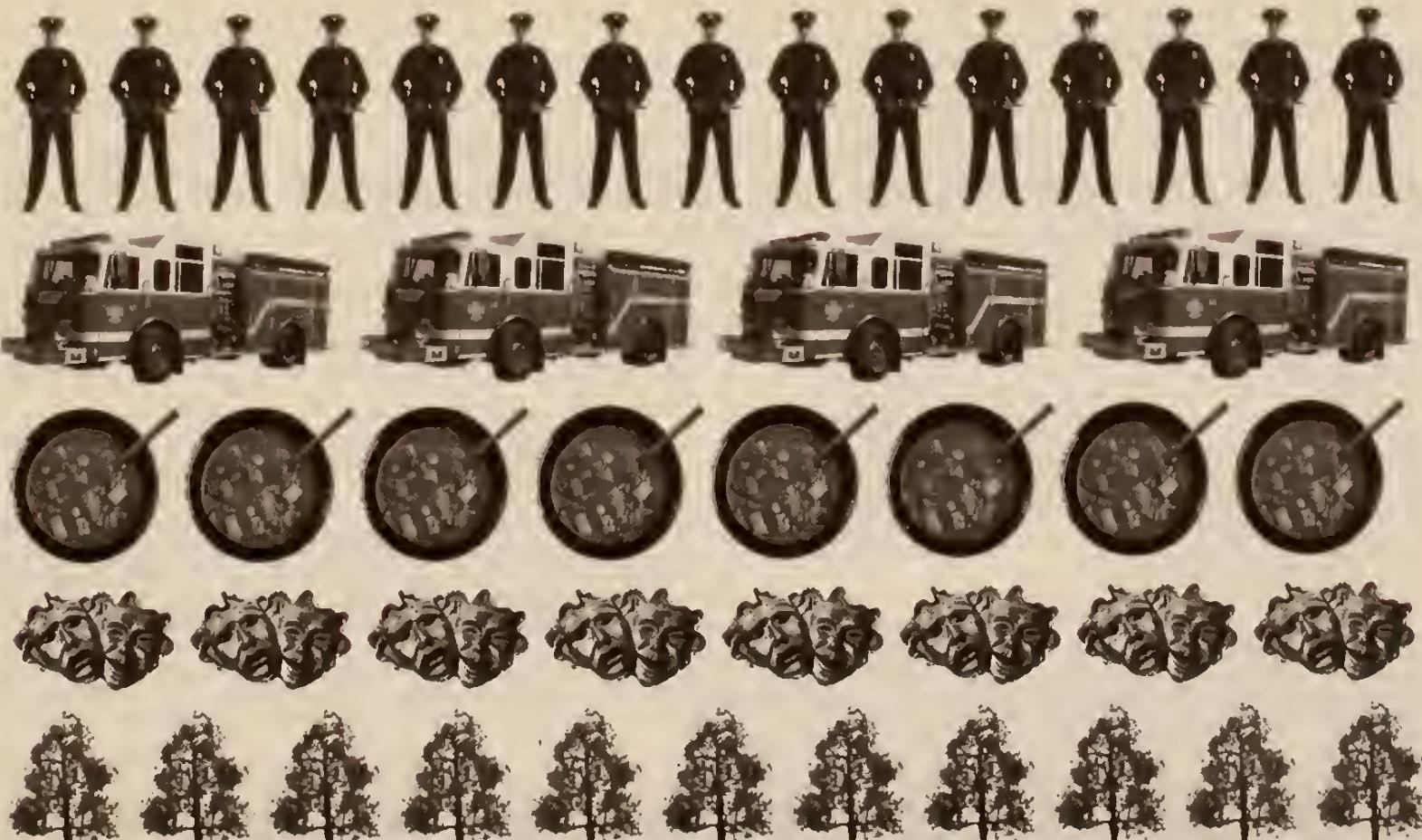
Emily Jeanette Price and Robert Macon Phillips III were married on May 30th, in Shelburne, Vermont.

The bride, 29, was born in San Francisco to Mary Price and Gerhard Stoll. Long-time Potrero Hill dwellers may remember her playing in the back of her mother's flower shop, now Christopher's Books. Emily attended Lowell High School, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Middlebury College, and received her masters degree, with honors, in City and Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She now works as a financial analyst for

Enterprise Community Investment, a national organization that specializes in financing affordable housing.

The bridegroom, 30, is a special assistant to President Barack Obama and serves as the White House's Director of New Media. A Huntsville, Alabama native, he's the son of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Macon Phillips, Jr. After receiving his bachelor's degree from Duke University, Macon spent two years in California, including one living on Russian Hill.

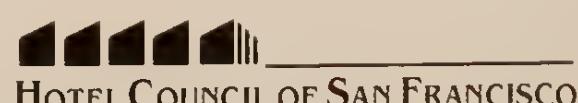
The couple will continue to live in Washington, DC.



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— SF DEPUTY CHIEF GARY MASSETANI



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But the San Francisco Board of Supervisors is considering a new plan that would cut funding and “brown out” more of our neighborhood firehouses, our first line of defense in the event of fires, medical emergencies or any major disaster.

Visit www.SaveOurFirehouses.com for instructions on how to call or email your local Supervisor to urge them to protect your neighborhood safety and Save Our Neighborhood Firehouses!



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Going to War

By David Matsuda

What a difference a year makes. In my previous engagement in Iraq I served in Sadr City and the Sunni Triangle. I witnessed friends killed by snipers. Convoys in which I rode were ambushed in complex attacks. Tension was always in the air, as if death was trying to strike up a conversation that you were desperately trying to ignore. I lived in "surge" housing, otherwise known as a trailer that was too cold in the winter, a sweat lodge in the summer and with paper thin walls that seemed to amplify every sound my neighbors and their guests made. Back then it was overcrowded bathrooms, long chow lines and workspaces crammed into rundown airplane hangers and trailers not fit for human habitation.

Two months ago I returned to an Iraq transformed. Americans and Iraqis work side by side on security and stability issues. Many third country national contractors have been replaced by Iraqis. There's a sense of normalcy occasionally punctuated by violence, rather than the opposite. Still, problems remain. The electricity grid is producing more power even as deferred maintenance breakdowns lead to frequent blackouts. The water supply is contaminated. Without a diversified economy to rely on, the government's budget is in free fall.

I'm stationed at Camp Victory, home to the Aw Faw Palace complex, a combination administrative center and royal pleasure ground for Saddam's sons Uday and Cusay. The centerpiece of an eight palace complex, Aw Faw's façade is pseudo Mesopotamian

architecture with a giant arched entrance way that leads into a grand rotunda ringed by spiral staircases and featuring a magnificent chandelier and Italian marble throughout. Aw Faw is the ceremonial center for the United States military, used to perform changing of the guard ceremonies and receive very important persons. Since I arrived I've met with a congressional delegation, grasped hands and locked eyes with President Barack Obama, and shared the palace halls with countless military tourists who ask me to take pictures of them on Saddam's throne, gifted to him by then Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir Arafat.

I now live in a wet CHU (Collapseable Housing Unit) trailer with a room on each end and a shared bathroom in the middle. Since the surge is over and troops are going home or being redirected to other theatres, the trailer and bathroom are essentially mine.

As Cultural Advisor to the Commanding General and his leadership team I no longer conduct neighborhood negotiations. I work at the strategic and operational levels, helping to craft our non-lethal partnership with the Iraqis through discussions with their leaders, and planning our complex exit strategy. I travel with the Commanding General to diplomatic events, and visit the embassy on his behalf to consult with the U.S. State Department on how to best help the Iraqis certify their upcoming elections.

GETTING INVOLVED



Dogpatch Neighborhood Association usually meets the second Tuesday of each even-numbered month. The next meeting is **June 9th**, at Sundance Coffee on Third Street at 20th Street from 7 to 9 p.m.

Potrero Boosters meets the last Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. (social time begins at 6:30 p.m.) in the wheelchair-accessible Game Room of the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House, 953 DeHaro Street. For more information, visit www.potrero boosters.org or contact President Tony Kelly at 341.8040 or president@potrero boosters.org. Next meeting: **June 30th**, 7 p.m.

Potrero Hill Association of Merchants & Businesses (PHAMB) meets the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. at Goat Hill Pizza, corner of Connecticut and 18th streets. Visit www.potrero hill.biz or call 341.8949. Next meeting: **June 9th**, 10 a.m.

Bayview Police Station Captain's Community Meeting is held on the first Tuesday of each month in the Bayview Police Station Community Room at 201 William Street. Access can be gained by entering through the Newhall Street door. Next meeting: **June 2nd**, 6 p.m.

Potrero Hill Democratic Club meets the First Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House, 953 DeHaro St. For more information, call 648.6740, www.PHDemClub.org. Next Meeting: **June 2nd**, 7pm.

Potrero Hill Garden Club usually meets the last Sunday of the month at 11 a.m. for a potluck lunch in a local home or garden. Discussions are held on subjects related to organic, edible, or ornamental gardening appropriate for Potrero Hill's microclimate. Call 648.1926 for details.

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**LIBRARY NEWS**

Abby Bridge, Potrero Branch Librarian
 Jasmin Springer, Mission Bay Branch Children's Librarian

Interim Services during Potrero Branch Closure

Bookmobile service is available on Tuesdays, 2:30 to 5 p.m., and Thursdays 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., on the north side of 1502 Mariposa Street, adjacent to the Jackson Park Recreation Center building. Services include borrowing, returning, reserving or picking up materials, and obtaining or renewing a library card.

Children's programs for June:

Storytime for children, from birth to five years old. Thursdays, June 4 and 11, 10:30 a.m.

Gary Lapow, Music for Children. Celebrate life with award-winning recording artist and well-loved performer of children's music, Gary Lapow. For children of all ages. Thursday, June 18, 10:30 a.m.

Flute Sweets and TickleTunes perform *Little Kids Little Songs*. Enjoy original songs created to engage the imagination of the very young. For infants and toddlers. Thursday, June 25, 10:30 a.m.

All programs held at St. Teresa's Community Hall, Connecticut and 19th streets. Enter on Connecticut Street.

Mission Bay Library

The Mission Bay Library is located at 960 Fourth Street, at Berry, near AT&T Park. The library is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Wednesdays, noon to 8 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Sundays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The Muni N and T lines are a block away, at Fourth and King Streets, and street parking is available on Channel Street, also a block away. The branch phone number is 355.2838. Additional branch information can be found at <http://missionbaylibrary.blogspot.com>.

The Mission Bay Branch Library offers a variety of children's and adult programming, including:

Baby Rhyme & Playtime. Rollicking rhymes, songs and books for infants to 18 months, and their caregivers. Thursdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25 at 10:15 a.m.

Toddler Tales. Books, rhymes, music, movement and more for toddlers 18 to 36 months, and their caregivers. Fridays, June 5, 12, 19, 26 at 4:00 p.m.

Preschool Storytimes. Stories, songs, finger plays and more for children ages three to five. Thursdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25 at 4:30 p.m.

Children's Yoga. Certified yoga instructor Tatjana Rmus leads a class for children ages three to five and their caregivers. Bring a mat or towel. Wednesday, June 3, 5:30 p.m.

Strategies for Ending Isolation and Loneliness for Older Adults and People with Disabilities. Wednesday, June 10, 6:30 p.m.

Nutrition and Cognitive Function for Older Adults. This program will offer diet, supplement, and physical activities for older adults. Tuesday, June 16, 2 p.m.

Carnival of Chaos. Mark Bunnell, "The Juggling Tornado," will entertain you with juggling, comedy and audience participation. For children ages three and older. Saturday, June 20, 4 p.m.

Swazzle Puppets presents "River Otter Circus" for children ages three and older. Saturday, June 27, 4:00 p.m.

Resources for Job Seekers

Employment-related titles can be found at Mission Bay and other nearby branches or reserved through the Bookmobile. The newly-opened Job Seekers Lab at the Main Library Training Center, fifth floor, is available to independent job seekers who need computer time and/or assistance to prepare and send out resumes, complete online applications, and perform other job search activities. The Lab is open on a drop-in basis on Mondays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The next *Jobs and Career Resources on the Internet* class will be held on June 10 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Main Library Training Center, 100 Larkin Street, 5th floor.

Potrero Library Campaign

The Potrero Neighborhood Library Campaign Committee meets monthly to discuss fundraising strategies and progress. Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m., usually on the third Wednesday of the month. If you'd like to join the campaign committee, please contact Tina Tom at Friends of the Library 626.7512, extension 106; tina.tom@friendssfpl.org.

Starr King

Continued from Front Page

Grace, Christa Conforti, and Dale Scott will serve two-year terms; while Richard McDerby, Jennifer Stebner and Chet Roman will serve for one year.

Before the vote Shields stated that seven of the individuals who were elected in 2006 either moved away or resigned, prompting one meeting participant to ask "How come everyone's termed out if it's staggered?" Many meeting candidates alluded to the lack of dialogue between the previous board and Potrero Hill residents about the state of the Openspace. Candidate Dale Scott went so far as to refer to Shields as the "Czar of the Openspace."

Candidate statements weren't available online until 24 hours prior to the election. And while the statements were also posted at the Nabe, there wasn't much time to learn about those running. Pascal Wassam was concerned that voters didn't have the time "required to make an intelligent decision," and proposed that a second meeting be scheduled for the vote, with the meeting night dedicated to vetting the candidates. That suggestion was voted down by a margin of 37 to 10.

According to Guidestar.com, Starr King Openspace hasn't filed a tax return since 2000. That return indicates that the Openspace had an income of \$6,664, with \$113,533 in assets and no expenses or liabilities. Some residents are concerned that little of these funds remain. Others are more focused on the nature of the preserve. According to Gary Shirsh, "[Former board member Ralph [Hunter] is in the park every single day pulling weeds." Since Starr King is Shirsh's "backyard" he wants to know "is the property being paid and how much money is left?" Les Hanson, who shares a house with Shirsh, isn't "so keen on just indigenous plants. I'm open to more diversity to beautify the area but also maintaining the habitat for the birds

and the bees."

Many of the board candidates and meeting attendees have children who attend Starr King Elementary School. Matt Mumper, who has twin sons starting at the school in the fall, voted for candidates who he felt "will work with the school, so that the kids get use out of [the park]." Corey Rosen, who attended the meeting with his wife and two young daughters, agreed. "I live on the Openspace and I want to be involved. I don't want to be on the board, but I want to be informed."

While the votes were being counted, meeting participants discussed proposed changes at 1321 De Haro Street. The new property owners want to remove a portion of Coral Road - a drive left over from wartime housing - and put in a smaller green driveway, affecting roughly 2,774 square feet. Most of the attendees indicated a preference for removing Coral Road entirely. One participant expressed concerns about the insects and birds that would still be at risk with the proposed driveway in place.

Scott, who chairs Starr King Elementary School's Green Committee, briefed the audience about changes going on at the school, including the possibility of collecting rain water on the south end roof, which could result in some spill over onto the Openspace. Audience members didn't seem concerned about this potential outcome.

Shields appeared to be pleased with the results, dispensing advice as the meeting drew to a close. She suggested that the newly elected board members sit down and "get to know each other before assigning officers." According to Shields, in reference to the large number of people who came out to vote, Starr King Openspace has "never had anything like this before. Not in 30 years."

To learn more about the new board members and what they do, visit <http://starrkingopenspace.org/newboard.html>.

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Community Leaders

Continued from Page 3

the business association through the View's calendar - "Meets second Tuesday of each month, 10 a.m. at Goat Hill Pizza" - and after attending one meeting he immediately joined. He appreciates Potrero Hill's and Dogpatch's unique character, with a large percentage of businesses volunteering on community projects, and is dedicated to buying local. Since Vaccaro joined PHAMB, membership has tripled, to 150 members, and marketing efforts have expanded to multimedia formats that help encourage greater participation in the association and local business partnerships. He recently attended the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies conference in Denver, and is "looking forward to bringing back ideas and tools that we can use in Potrero and Dogpatch."

Two years ago Eisen co-founded a reinvigorated version of the Potrero Hill Democratic Club, which hosts monthly political speakers, such as City Attorney Dennis Herrera and candidates for local and statewide office. A 36-year Hill resident, she's a passionate organic gardener and served as Potrero Hill Garden Club president until recently. Eisen would like to see Potrero Hill evolve into a place in which "everyone is growing food. If not chickens and fruit trees in every yard, at least a pot of Italian parsley or wild onions on the windowsill."



Julie Jackson and Brian Liles started Jackson Liles Architecture in part because they saw the role the firm could play in the development of their community. After graduating from the University of Cincinnati School of Architecture, the couple moved to the Hill in 1994. They recently provided pro-bono architectural services to two neighborhood projects, the Potrero Kids at Daniel Webster preschool and the preliminary design for re-use of the BluePeter Building in Dogpatch. Julie is co-President of the Leonard R. Flynn Parent-Teacher Association, and initiated the popular Potrero Neighbors Yahoo group a half-decade ago after a series of neighborhood criminal incidents. Brian is the Friends of Potrero Hill Nursery School's board chair, and is a member of the YMCA Camp Jones Gulch Property Committee. The couple hopes that the Hill's "eclectic and involved community continues to thrive" with the addition of more gathering places, enhanced open spaces, and improved pedestrian connections between open spaces and activity areas.



Joni Eisen "got serious about politics" four years ago, when she discovered how strongly money influences elections. Eisen realized that "we've got to get our politicians out of the fundraising game - and the paybacks it involves - if we're ever going to achieve our goals, like reversing global warming, restoring public education, and health care for everyone." Eisen organized a local group, part of the California Clean Money Campaign, which meets monthly on the Hill, and is trying to place the California Fair Elections Act on the ballot next year.

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In 2005, a group of parents of preschool age children rallied fellow Potrero Hill residents to save Daniel Webster Elementary School from a SFUSD proposal to close the campus and merge it with Starr King Elementary School, gathering more than 600 signatures opposing the proposal. They were successful, but didn't stop there. They formed Potrero Residents Education Fund (PREFund), a working group of Potrero Hill parents and neighbors dedicated to creating excellent educational opportunities on the Hill. As a result of PREFund's efforts, a Spanish immersion program was launched at Webster last year, as was an on-campus Spanish bilingual preschool, Potrero Kids at Daniel Webster, which serves 36 children and acts as a feeder school to Daniel Webster.

Seven advocacy-minded mothers lead PREFund: Stacey Bartlett, vice president of preschool operations and PKDW director, enjoyed championing the first grant that refurbished Daniel Webster's exterior. Jennifer Betti, PREFund president, fondly remembered the long line wrapped

around the building for PKDW's first day of enrollment. Dena Fischer, PREFund vice president of community relations, recalled registering sons Sam and Henry for kindergarten at Webster, and "realizing how truly far we've come since that first casual conversation back in 2005!" Katherine Doumani, PREFund vice president of project development, enjoyed building a garden at Webster. Debra Grassgreen, PREFund chief financial officer, remembers replacing the courtyard weeds with a garden just in time for the school year. Melissa Millsaps, PREFund political director, was proud to gain everyone's trust, from the San Francisco Board of Education, to SFUSD staff, principal, and teachers. Laura Mitic, PREFund vice president of fundraising, is delighted that sixteen people placed DW first on their list of schools they wanted their children to attend.

Many other neighborhood leaders contribute to the neighborhood landscape, and deserve mention for their hard work. Let us know about your favorite community leader: editor@potreroview.net

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